



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

June 6, 2006

News Release

ICE agents arrest 25 illegals working at Memphis chemical plants

-Arrests part of ICE's continued efforts in protecting our nation's critical infrastructure sites-

MEMPHIS--Twenty-five illegal aliens working here as contractor employees for Lucite International and Arkema were arrested May 26 by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents working alongside agents and officers of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Shelby County Sheriff's Office.

The illegal aliens, all men, were working at a Memphis-area industrial park that includes plants for several companies. Those arrested, all Mexican nationals, used fraudulent documents and made false statements to gain employment at the Lucite and Arkema plants. Some have also been identified as having illegally re-entered the country after having been deported.

Under federal law, employers who knowingly hire or refer unauthorized workers can face substantial fines, and in certain aggravated cases, criminal prosecution.

David Kustoff, the United States Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee will be evaluating each case for possible federal criminal prosecution. The men will also face administrative immigration action for their violations to the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

These arrests are an important phase of an ongoing criminal investigation of subcontractors operating at critical infrastructure facilities. This investigation is part of an ongoing post-9/11 worksite initiative that focuses on businesses with security sensitive sites such as airports, defense installations, bio-agriculture industries, shipyards and chemical plants.

An important goal of this investigation is to enhance private/public partnerships to protect U.S. businesses against possible security breaches.

"Protecting the integrity of the chemical industry in Tennessee is a crucial part of ICE's interior enforcement strategy," said Michael A. Holt special agent-in-charge for ICE in New Orleans. "When an individual uses fraudulent or false documents to get a job, they hide their identity and possible criminal history."

United States Attorney David Kustoff, echoing SAC Holt's comments, stated, "On behalf of the Department of Justice, I offer my sincerest thanks to the fine special agents from ICE for their thoroughness, professionalism, and resolve, in concluding this important phase to an ongoing operation".

To aid employers with the screening process, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) operates the Basic Pilot Program, a Web-based system that businesses can use to verify the employment eligibility of newly hired workers. Nationwide there are more than 15,000 employer sites linked into the Basic Pilot Program. Interested employers are urged to call the agency's toll-free number [888-464-4218] to obtain more information about the program.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.